

Tragically, however, the Bush administration proposed decreased funding levels for the ARC's nonhighway program by more than 50 percent. Of course, President Bush's friends in the Republican-led House followed through with his wishes by imposing the cuts in appropriations for next year. Now, the administration and the House Republicans say that they want to shift the ARC's nonhighway responsibilities to EDA for larger multijurisdictional projects, diluting the unique attention ARC provides this region of vast potential to serve our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have to be able to express my strong support for the EDA, and I support reauthorization of this vital agency. But, on behalf of West Virginians and all those throughout the Appalachian region, I mourn for the cuts to the ARC.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to the order of the House of Monday, October 20, 2003, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2535, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and that I may include tabular and extraneous material on the motion to go to conference on H.R. 3289.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE AND FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN, 2004

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3289) making emergency supplemental appropriations for defense and for the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

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MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OBEY moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill H.R. 3289 making emergency supplemental appropriations for defense and for the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, be instructed to insist on the provisions of the Senate bill:

Regarding medical screening for members of the Ready Reserve of the Armed Forces (Section 317).

Regarding transitional health care and benefits for 180 days from separation for members of the Armed Forces (Sec. 321).

Regarding the provision that \$10,000,000,000 of the amounts provided for the reconstruction of Iraq be in the form of loans, subject to certain conditions (Sec. 2319), and

Regarding the provision of \$1,300,000,000 to the Veterans Health Administration for medical care for Veterans (Title IV).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) will each control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 9½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, we are about to go to conference on a bill which spends \$87 billion. It is the second installment of what will be many installment payments to deal with the consequences of the war in Iraq. This motion to instruct attempts to put the House on record in favor of three provisions which the Senate passed earlier last week.

First, with respect to the issue of loans versus grants, this motion would provide that after \$5.1 billion is set aside for military and security operations, and after \$5.1 billion is set aside for Ambassador Bremer to deal with other costs associated with the effort in Iraq, that the remaining \$10 billion of the reconstruction portion of the package be provided in the form of a loan, unless the President certifies that 90 percent of the bilateral debt owed by Iraq to other countries is forgiven.

The purpose of this first provision is to recognize that, over the next 5 years, the per capita foreign debt of the United States will be larger than is the per capita debt of Iraq, and since foreign debts can only be paid off by a country running trade surpluses, that means that, in effect, over the next 5 years Iraq will be in a better position to repay their foreign debts than we will be.

Secondly, we ask the House to go on record in support of two provisions that relate to quality-of-life measures for our troops. The first is to provide

medical screening and dental screening for Guard and Reserve personnel prior to their being mobilized; and, second, to extend the transitional health care coverage to servicemembers who have been on active duty in Iraq and are now returning home, to extend that transitional health care coverage from the existing 60 days to 180 days. Certainly, that is the least we can do for these returning servicemen and women.

Thirdly, we ask the House to go on record in support of \$1.3 billion in additional funds for veterans health care so that Priority 7 and Priority 8 veterans can make better use of veterans health care facilities without having to pay a \$250 deductible and without seeing the cost of their prescriptions virtually doubled. This is, in essence, the content of the Bond-Mikulski amendment adopted in the other body.

That is what this does, and I would ask Members to support it.

I would also ask that if they do support it, they recognize that they have an obligation to then insist that these provisions be contained in the conference report, because they are already in the Senate bill. As Members know, conference committees are supposed to deal only with those matters which are in dispute between the two bodies. So I would urge any veteran or any other interested American citizen watching this debate to keep close track of how Members vote today, and compare that vote with how they vote when this conference report comes back. I think in that way it will in effect mean that they will be acting as a "hypocrisy detector," which is always good for this body, when someone is looking over our shoulders.

I want to say one other thing. I know that the President of the United States is a powerful man. I know that in this town he is probably the biggest man on campus that you can find. But the fact is that I have never yet met a White House who did not think that Article I of the Constitution was a drafting error by the Founding Fathers. And I think that we need to remind all Presidents that we represent the same citizens that they do. We owe every President our respect, we owe every President a respectful hearing, but he also owes us the same thing, and that means that we need to work with each other.

Checks and balances: Mr. Speaker, in my view checks and balances is not simply an ornamental concept of democracy; it is a core element. It is the heart of our democratic system, and we have a right to expect the same respectful hearing from the President if we have an opinion that differs from his, as we have an obligation to give his views a respectful hearing.

But I note in today's article by E.J. Dionne in the Washington Post that the President, in a meeting last week, appears to have provided something other than that respectful hearing to Members of Congress.